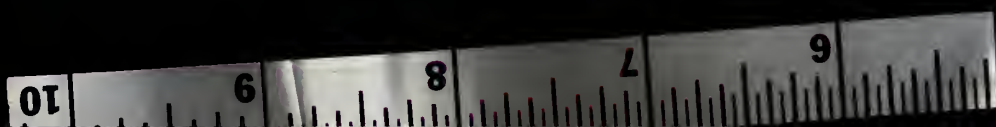




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Abraham Lincoln and religion

Unitarian

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



LINCOLN'S RELIGION IS SERMON SUBJECT

Unitarian Pastor Asks If President's View Was Safe.

"Is Abraham Lincoln's view of the church safe for public spirited citizens to accept?" the Rev. R. Ernest Akin, pastor of the First Unitarian Church, questioned yesterday morning in an address on "Lincoln's Religion."

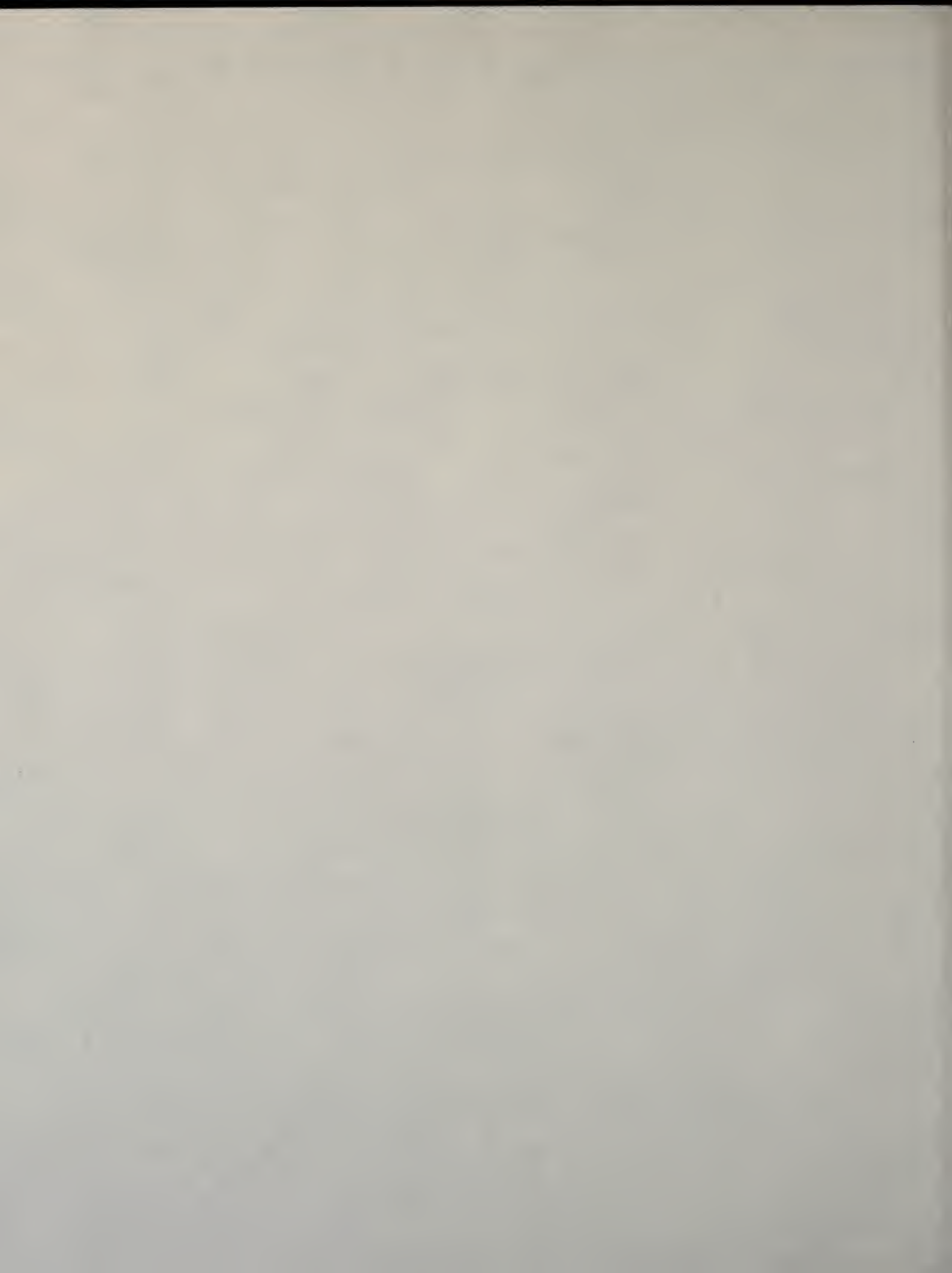
"Mr. Lincoln was not a member of any church, but he was a devoutly religious man," the pastor said, "and found great consolation and help through prayer."

"But with a knowledge of the value of the church for community and nation," the pastor said, "has a man the right to remain outside of it?"

"Is it not an indictment against the church," he continued, "if a sincere, religious man like Lincoln could not feel at home there, cluttered as it is with forms and definitions and man-made creeds?"

The church is not serving the real needs of men as it should, the pastor declared, "for instead of teaching its followers to be humble imitators of Jesus and earnest seekers after truth, it tries to cram some antiquated creed down their throats."

"The church is needed in the community for the real values of industry, the confidences and credits, without which modern business cannot be carried on, are dependent on the moral qualities which the church teaches."



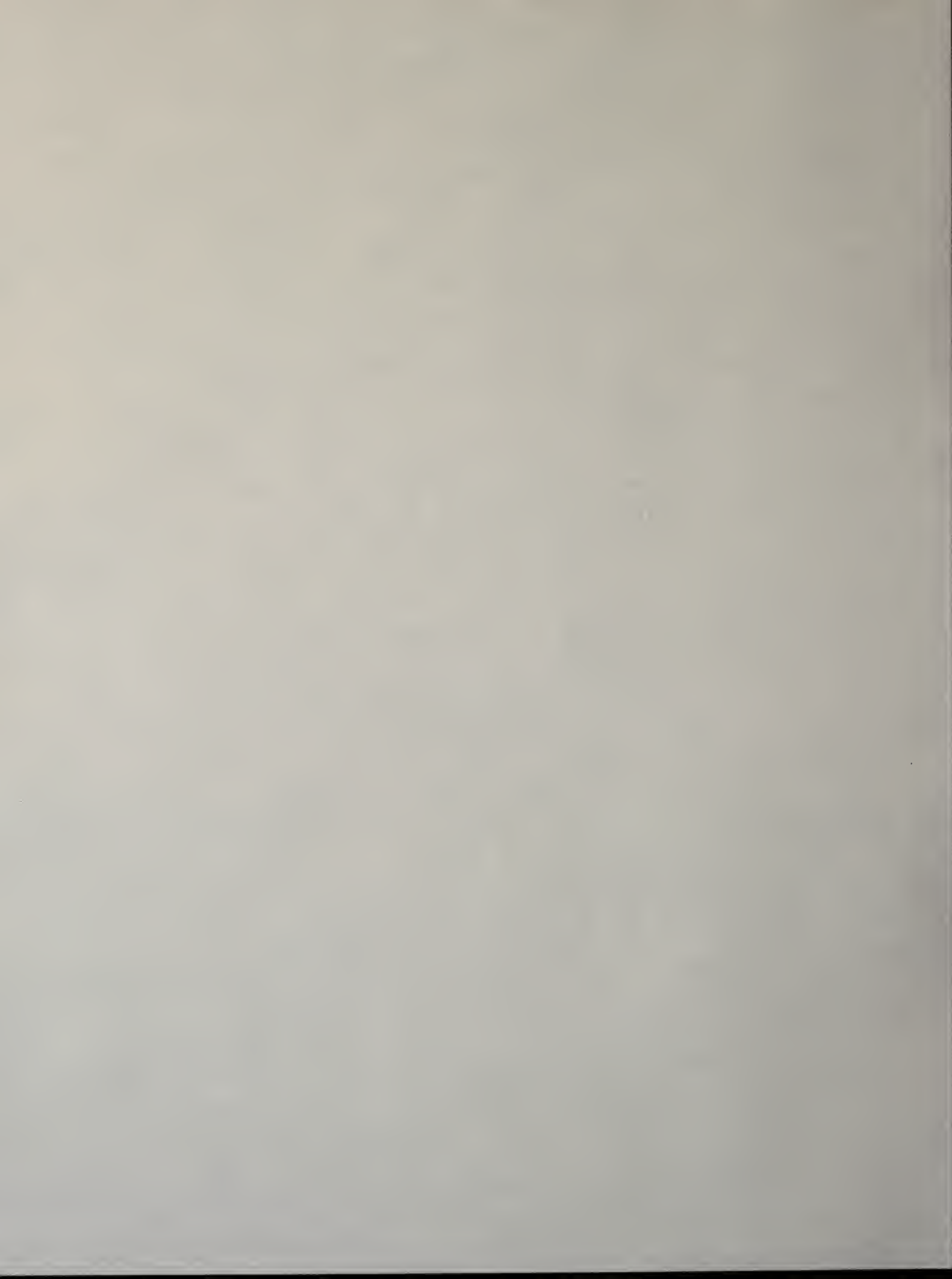
NOTE ON ABRAHAM LINCOLN

In the current issue of the Christian Register (February) there is an interesting and significant item regarding Abraham Lincoln, supplied by an honored member of this church, Miss Emma Hayward. It is based on an entry in the diary of her father, John A. Hayward, a member of the Committee of Management of the Unitarian Church of Washington, dated January 15, 1865, and reads as follows: "Attended church this morning with Theodore and Mary. Heard a fine sermon from Mr. Channing (William H.). The subject was 'The Birth of the New Nation.' President Lincoln honored us with his presence." While it is true, therefore, that Lincoln was a frequent attendant at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church and sometimes went to St. John's across Lafayette Square, he did not hesitate to expose himself on at least one occasion to Unitarianism. There, we may be sure, he did not have to give his "assent to long and complicated creeds and catechisms"; there he found the type of church he once said he would gladly unite with: "a church which would ask simply for assent to the Saviour's statement of the substance of the law: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." The very fact that Lincoln once attended a Unitarian service indicates that he was free from narrow denominational prejudice; and together with his expressed views on religion strengthens our conviction that he was one with us in spirit.

"There is now no choice before us; either we must succeed in providing a rational coordination of impulses and thoughts or for centuries, civilization will sink into a mere welter of minor excitements. We must produce a great age or see the collapse of the upward stirring of our race."

—A. N. Whitehead.

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The Washington Unitarian, Feb 1947





HE NEVER JOINED A CHURCH

WALTER DONALD KRING

"He never joined a church, but still he was a religious man." — MARY TODD LINCOLN

Probably Lincoln never found a church that would meet the requirements of his convictions. If that is the reason that he never joined a church, he certainly was being honest to the best that was in him. No man should join a church simply because it is what other people are doing, or simply because he is urged to join. A man should join a church because it fits in with his best insights and highest convictions.

To my way of thinking there is no church which offers the opportunity to think for oneself and to keep constantly searching for the religious in life so well as the Unitarian fellowship. We unite solely upon the basis that we are concerned about religious matters, and we give each man the right to make up his own mind in matters of faith and doctrine. It seems to me that this is essentially the sort of freedom which the world needs so much today. Totalitarianism in one sphere is no better or worse than in any other sphere, religion included. But many men, who in the normal activities of life would respect authority but would not give it too much emphasis, when it comes to matters of religion throw up their hands and say, "That is not for me to decide." But the integrity of the individual conscience

is the goal of religion as well as of morals and of democracy. Therefore the Unitarian faith is a completely democratic faith.

A good many people get the idea, mistakenly, of course, that because Unitarians make no profession of faith they do not believe anything. As someone aptly, but again mistakenly, put it, "Unitarians believe in nothing and live up to it." But it seems to me that in our emphasis upon the right and privilege but also the duty of thinking out religious problems for oneself that we are laying stress upon the most important thing in the world. For what is religion but a search after that which is the best, the noblest, and the loftiest to which man can aspire? If religion is a search it is not always possible to find what we are looking for. There will be areas of "fuzziness," realms in which we cannot know the final truth. There the Unitarian is content to let things remain in a state of suspension of final judgment. Perhaps we will have more enlightenment later, but until we do we are not unhappy that we as human beings do not know all of God's mysteries.

People who join our church profess as they join with us that they will be our fellow seekers after the truth. Probably they could be like Lincoln and be religious without joining a church. But it is better to join a church if one can find a church that suits one's temperament. I think that Lincoln could have been a Unitarian if he had been aware of the freedom of belief, the right of every man to think for himself on matters of religion. I think that would have appealed to Lincoln's mind; it would have satisfied his conscience.

DIVISION OF PUBLICATIONS
AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION
25 Beacon St., Boston 8, Mass.

Printed in U.S.A. — October, 1949

Rabbi Drooz' Thesis

Lincoln Given Unitarian Bent

Lincoln, if he could have been identified with any one religion, was perhaps "closer to the Unitarian way of thought than any other" in the opinion of Rabbi Herbert E. Drooz.

Lincoln's religion and the deep feeling he generates throughout the world 100 years later were examined by Rabbi Drooz of Temple Beth Emeth in an hour-long talk last night at the annual meeting of the Lincoln Club of Delaware.

THE CLUB MEETING — a black tie affair attended by 155 in the Soda House on the estate of Mrs. R. R. M. Carpenter — was the only public observance of Lincoln's birthday here. It was a holiday for banks, state, city and county employes, but a working day for others.

In "supposing" that Lincoln

was close to Unitarianism, Rabbi Drooz mentioned that the works of William Ellery Channing had been presented to the Civil War president and that he had read them.

But 4,000 volumes have appeared trying to evaluate Lincoln so far, Rabbi Drooz said, and the search goes on. He called Lincoln "a kind of Shakespearean man" and "a man who kept on growing in a most remarkable way."

WITH EVIDENCE that he had Quaker ancestry, that his father, mother and stepmother were profoundly religious in the fundamentalist pattern of their community, Rabbi Drooz said Lincoln was "no doubt a rationalist," but once published an ad that while he was a member of no church he believed in the Scriptures.

Rabbi Drooz recalled with a smile that as a boy he had heard a remark that Lincoln "would have been at home in a synagogue" and he said today he found nothing strange in this.

The Scriptural "love thy neighbor as thyself" was no glittering generality to him," said the rabbi.

RABBI DROOZ spoke at length of the feelings of the visitors to the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, "where the man has proven himself mightier than the marble."

He recalled the words in Lincoln's second inaugural address, "the better angels of our natures," interpreting them to mean "the good inclinations . . . the great universals."

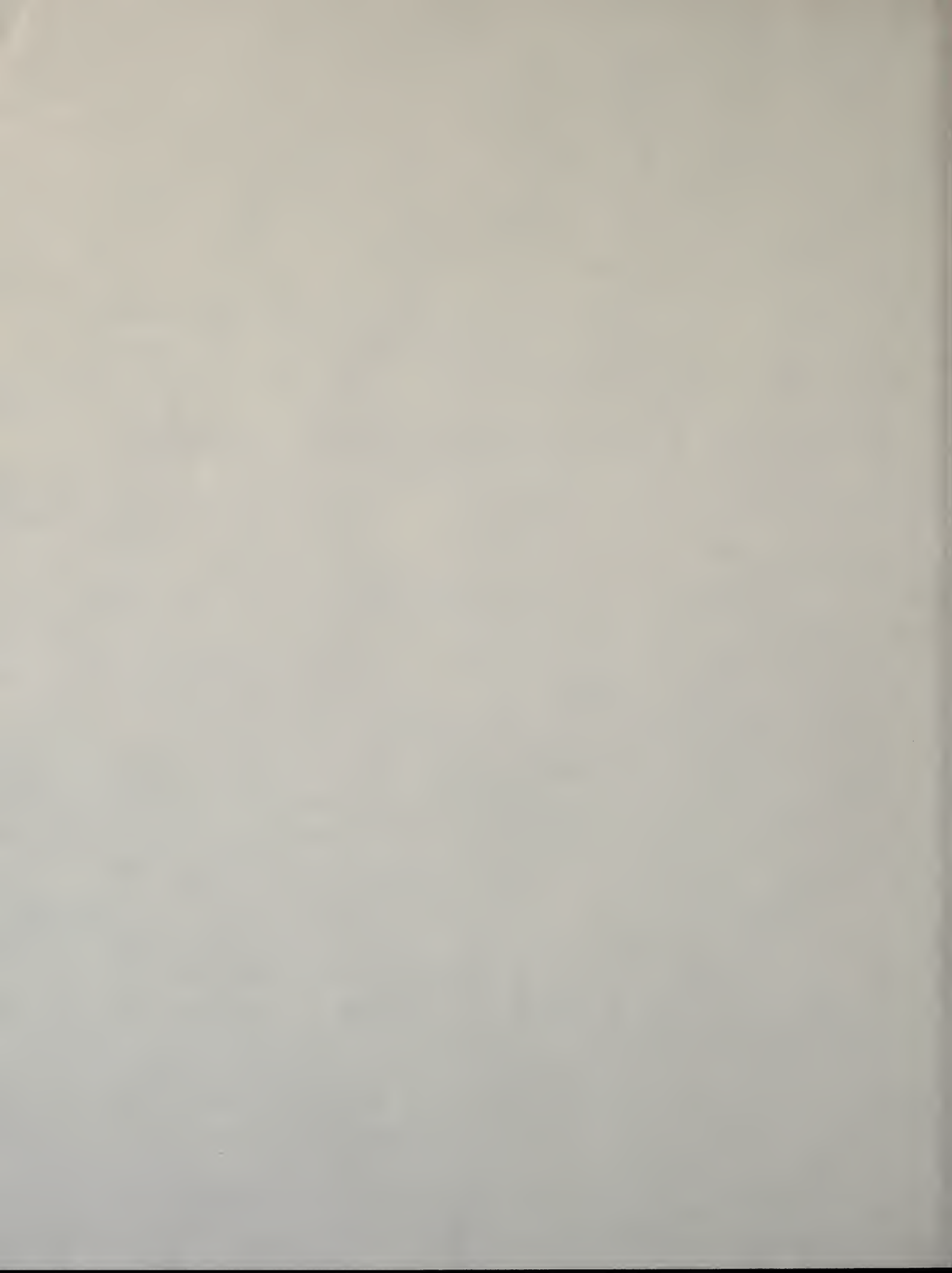
On a visit there, he said, "We

see what it is to be a human being in the image of God."

SPEAKING OF "the total sincerity that is expressed in Lincoln's relationship to man," Rabbi Drooz asked in his conclusion, "If America is the producer of mediocrity, how does one account for this man?"

In an election before the address, five were elected to two year terms on the club board of directors. They are Superior Court Judge Andrew D. Christie, Dr. Allen D. King, Albert W. James, Willard R. Heald and J. Paul Heinel.

The club, dedicated to the maintenance of the Lincoln Room of the Wilmington Institute Free Library, also heard a report on progress during the year by Harland A. Carpenter, librarian.





Lincoln Lore

July, 1978

Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor.
Mary Jane Hubler, Editorial Assistant. Published each month by the
Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

Number 1685

FIVE EX-PRESIDENTS WATCHED THE LINCOLN ADMINISTRATION

Presidents who retire from office are expected to become "elder statesmen." Former President Richard M. Nixon seems currently to be bidding for that status by promising to speak occasionally "in non-political forums." He will stress foreign policy, he says, because partisanship is supposed to end at America's shores. He promises to be above the partisan battles of the day; he will become an elder statesman.

In Lincoln's day, Presidents who left office did not automatically assume the status of elder statesmen. The five surviving ex-Presidents in 1861 — Martin Van Buren, John Tyler,

Millard Fillmore, Franklin Pierce, and James Buchanan — did have enough reputation for being above the party battles for it to be suggested more than once that they meet to find remedies for the secession crisis. That such a meeting never took place is eloquent testimony to the weakness of the non-partisan ideal in the nineteenth century. The broad public did not regard these men — and the ex-Presidents did not regard each other — as passionless Nestors well on their way to becoming marble statues. They proved, in fact, to be fiercely partisan.



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 1. Lincoln met two former Presidents shortly before his inauguration in 1861. Millard Fillmore greeted him in Buffalo, New York, and he met the incumbent, James Buchanan, twice in Washington. Reporters indicated that in both cases Lincoln chatted amiably, but no one knows the subjects of their conversations.

It was an irony that John Tyler came nearest to assuming an official status as a nonpartisan adjudicator in a conference meant to reconcile the sections, for he would later demonstrate the greatest partisan difference from the Lincoln administration of any of the former Presidents. By November of 1860, Tyler already thought it too late for a convocation of representatives of all the states to arrive at a compromise settlement which would save the Union. He did recommend a meeting of "border states" which would bear the brunt of any sectional war in the event a compromise was not reached. New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri could at least arrange a peaceful separation of the South if they could not keep the Union together. Tyler's proposal never bore fruit, but, when the Virginia General Assembly proposed a peace conference of all states in Washington for February, 1861, Tyler became one of Virginia's five commissioners at the convention. The delegates in Washington elected Tyler president of the conference unanimously, but the convention was so divided in voting on recommendations that it was largely ignored by Congress. Tyler returned to Virginia and became an advocate of secession. When urged to lead a compromise movement after the fall of Fort Sumter in the spring, Tyler thought it hopeless. Lincoln, he said, "having weighed in the scales the value of a mere local Fort against the value of the Union itself" had brought on "the very collision he well knew would arise whenever Fort Sumter was attempted to be reinforced or provisioned." In November, Tyler was elected to serve in the Confederate House of Representatives. Far from becoming an elder statesman, John Tyler played a role in destroying the nation which had once elected him Vice-President.

Millard Fillmore despised Republicans as threats to the Union he loved and had once helped to preserve (by supporting the Compromise of 1850). In the secession crisis, he felt that the burden lay upon Republicans to give "some assurance . . . that they, . . . are ready and willing to . . . repeal all unconstitutional state laws; live up to the compromises of the Constitution, and . . . treat our Southern brethren as friends." Nevertheless, he disagreed with the cautious policy of lame-duck President James Buchanan, who felt that the government had no authority to "coerce a state." The men who passed ordinances of secession, Fillmore argued, should be "regarded as an unauthorized assembly of men conspiring to commit treason, and as such liable to be punished like any other unlawful assembly engaged in the same business."

Though no one knows how Fillmore voted in 1860, it is doubtful that he voted for Lincoln. It seemed awkward, there-

fore, when Fillmore was Lincoln's official host during his stay in Buffalo, New York, on the way to Washington for the inaugural ceremonies. Fillmore took him to the First Unitarian Church in the morning and at night to a meeting in behalf of Indians, but no one knows what they talked about.

When war broke out in April, Fillmore rallied quickly to the colors. Four days after the fall of Fort Sumter, the ex-President was speaking to a mass Union rally in Buffalo, saying that it was "no time now to inquire by whose fault or folly this state of things has been produced;" it was time for "every man to stand to his post, and . . . let posterity . . . find our skeleton and armor on the spot where duty required us to stand." He gave five hundred dollars for the support of families of volunteers and soon organized the Union Continentals, a company of men too old to fight. Enrolling Buffalo's older men of sub-

stance in the Union cause, the Continentals dressed in colorful uniforms, provided escorts for ceremonial and patriotic occasions, and provided leverage for procuring donations for the Union cause. Fearing British invasion through Canada to aid the Confederacy, Fillmore hounded the government to provide arms and men to protect the Niagara frontier.

Suddenly in February of 1864, Fillmore performed an abrupt about-face. In the opening address for the Great Central Fair of the Ladies Christian Commission in Buffalo, Fillmore rehearsed a catalogue of war-induced suffering and announced that "lasting peace" would come only when much was "forgiven, if not forgotten." When the war ended, the United States should restore the South "to all their rights under the Constitution." Republicans were outraged. The ex-President had turned a nonpartisan patriotic rally into a veiled criticism of the administration's conduct of the war.

Personally, Fillmore felt that the country was "on the verge of ruin." Without a change in the administration, he said, "we must soon end in national bankruptcy and military despotism." The ex-President, once a Whig and a Know-Nothing, endorsed Democrat George B. McClellan for the Presidency in 1864.

After Lincoln's assassination, Fillmore led the delegation which met the President's funeral train and escorted it to Buffalo. This did not expunge from Republican's memories Fillmore's partisan acts of 1864. Nor did it cool his dislike of Republicans. In 1869, he stated that it would be "a blessing to break the ranks of the corrupt proscription radical party, that now curses the country. Could moderate men of both parties unite in forming a new one . . . it would be well."

Among the five living ex-Presidents, none was more hostile to President Lincoln than Franklin Pierce. In 1860, he hoped



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 2. Millard Fillmore.

that a united Democratic party would choose Southern candidate John C. Breckinridge. The New Hampshire Democrats endorsed Stephen A. Douglas instead, but Pierce went along with the decision, though without enthusiasm. Lincoln's election was, for this Democratic ex-President, a "distinct and unequivocal denial of the coequal rights" of the states. In a letter written on Christmas Eve, 1861, Pierce urged the South to delay action for six months. If the North did not right the wrongs done the South, then she could depart in peace.

It was hoped that all of the ex-Presidents might attend John Tyler's Washington Peace Conference. Pierce declined, saying that "the North have been the first wrong doers and [he had] never been able to see how a successful appeal could be made to the south without first placing [the North] right." After news of Fort Sumter's fall, however, he reconsidered and wrote ex-President Martin Van Buren, suggesting that Van Buren assemble the former Presidents in Philadelphia to resolve the crisis. He spoke in Concord, New Hampshire, urging the citizens "to stand together and uphold the flag." Van Buren declined to call the former Presidents together and suggested that Pierce himself should. The wind went out of the sails of the idea of an ex-Presidents' peace convention.

Soon, Pierce lost his enthusiasm for the war effort. He made a trip in the summer of 1861 to Michigan and Kentucky to visit old political friends. On Christmas Eve, he received a letter from Secretary of State William H. Seward, then in charge of the administration's political arrests, enclosing a letter from an anonymous source which accused Pierce of making his trip to promote membership in the Knights of the Golden Circle, "a secret league" whose object was "to overthrow the Government." Seward unceremoniously demanded an explanation from the former President of the United States. Pierce indignantly denied the charge, Seward quickly apologized, and it was soon discovered that Seward had fallen for a hoax. An opponent of the Republicans had written the letter to show how far the Republicans would go in their policy of crying "treason" at the slightest provocation.

Pierce sank into despair. He loathed the proscription of civil liberties in the North, detested emancipation, and saw the Lincoln administration as a despotic reign. The killing of white men for the sake of freeing black men was beyond his comprehension. He thought Lincoln a man of "limited ability and narrow intelligence" who was the mere tool of the abolitionists. He stopped short of endorsing the Southern cause. Old friends avoided him, but Pierce swore never to "justify, sustain, or in any way or to any extent uphold this cruel, heartless, aimless unnecessary war."

At a rally in Concord on July 4, 1863, Pierce courted martyrdom. "True it is," he said, "that I may be the next victim of unconstitutional, arbitrary, irresponsible power." He called efforts to maintain the Union by force of arms "futile" and said that only through "peaceful agencies" could it be saved. Pamphlets compared Pierce to Benedict Arnold, but he persisted and urged the Democratic party to adopt a platform in 1864 calling for restoring the Union by ceasing to fight. Republicans did not forget his actions. New Hampshire provided no public recognition of her son's public career for fifty years after the war.

Martin Van Buren, alone among the ex-Presidents, gave the Lincoln administration unwavering support. He refused Pierce's invitation to organize a meeting of ex-Presidents out of a desire not to be associated with James Buchanan, whose course during the secession crisis Van Buren despised. He had confidence in Lincoln, based probably on information he received from the Blair family, Montgomery Blair being a Republican and a member of Lincoln's cabinet.

There was no more interesting course pursued by an ex-President than James Buchanan's. He had more reason than any other to feel directly antagonistic to the Lincoln administration. Like Pierce, Buchanan had been accused by Lincoln in 1858 of conspiring with Stephen A. Douglas and Roger B. Taney to nationalize slavery in the United States. As Lincoln's immediate predecessor in the office, Buchanan had succeeded in his goal of avoiding war with the South until the new administration came in. The price of this success was the popular imputation of blame on the weak and vacillating course of the Buchanan administration for not nipping seces-

sion in the bud. It was commonly asserted that Buchanan conspired with secessionists to let the South out of the Union. Lincoln's Vice-President Hannibal Hamlin, for example, felt that the Buchanan administration "connives at acts of treason at the South." Despite the findings of a Congressional investigation, many persisted in the belief that the administration had allowed a disproportionate share of arms to flow to Southern arsenals and a dangerously large amount of money to remain in Southern mints. When war broke out, feelings were so strong against Buchanan that he required a guard from the local Masonic Lodge in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to protect his home, Wheatland, from vandalism and himself from personal injury. President Lincoln did not help Buchanan's plight when, in his message of July 4, 1861, he charged that he found the following upon entering office: a "disproportionate share, of the Federal muskets and rifles" in Southern armories, money in Southern mints, the "Navy . . . scattered in distant seas," and Fort Pickens incapable of reinforcement because of "some quasi armistice of the late administration."

Such charges rankled Buchanan, and he spent much of the war years in a careful but quiet attempt to amass documentation which would refute the charges. By late 1862, he had written a book which accomplished this task (to his satisfaction, at least), but he delayed publication until 1866 "to avoid the possible imputation . . . that any portion of it was intended to embarrass Mr. Lincoln's administration." Buchanan's friend Jeremiah Black had doubted that Buchanan could defend his own administration without attacking Lincoln's:

It is vain to think that the two administrations can be made consistent. The fire upon the Star of the West was as bad as the fire on Fort Sumter; and the taking of Fort Moultrie & Pinckney was worse than either. If this war is right and politic and wise and constitutional, I cannot but think you ought to have made it.

Despite the many reasons for which Buchanan might have opposed the Lincoln administration, the ex-President did not. As far as he was concerned, the seceding states "chose to commence civil war, & Mr. Lincoln had no alternative but to defend the country against dismemberment. I certainly should have done the same thing had they begun the war in my time, & this they well knew." Buchanan did not think the war unconstitutional, and he repeatedly told Democrats that it was futile to demand peace proposals. He also supported the draft.

Buchanan considered it too late in 1864 for the Democrats to argue that Lincoln had changed the war's aims. He was pleased to see that McClellan, the Democratic candidate, thought so too. Lincoln's victory in the election, which Buchanan equated with the dubious honor of winning an elephant, caused Buchanan to think that the President should give a "frank and manly offer to the Confederates that they might return to the Union just as they were before." The ex-President's political views were as clearly nostalgic and indifferent to emancipation as those of any Democrat, but he was not among those Democrats who criticized the war or the measures Lincoln used to fight it.

Buchanan spoke of Lincoln in complimentary language. He thought him "a man of honest heart & true manly feelings." Lincoln was "patriotic," and Buchanan deemed his assassination "a terrible misfortune." The two men had met twice when Lincoln came to Washington to assume the Presidency, and Buchanan recalled the meetings fondly, remembering Lincoln's "kindly and benevolent heart and . . . plain, sincere and frank manners." When the Lincoln funeral train passed through Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Buchanan watched it from his buggy.

The ex-Presidents benefitted from the Revisionism of historians like James G. Randall. It was their work which rectified the generations-old charge that Buchanan trifled with treason. In some cases, however, this has been a distorting force. Randall's *Lincoln the President: Midstream* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1952) gives the reader an extremely sympathetic portrait of Franklin Pierce in keeping with Randall's view that most Democrats more truly represented Lincoln's views than his fellow Republicans. Thus Pierce appears as the victim of Seward's misguided zeal in the affair of the Knights of

the Golden Circle hoax and, in a particularly touching moment, as the friendly consoler of a bereaved father in the White House. In a horrible train accident immediately before entering the Presidency, Pierce and his wife had witnessed the death of their young son mangled in the wreckage of their car. Therefore, when Willie Lincoln died in 1862, ex-President Pierce sent a letter offering condolences. This is all one learns of Franklin Pierce in Randall's volumes on Lincoln's administration. It is useful to know of his partisan opposition to Lincoln and the war as well, and it in no way detracts from the magnanimity of his letter of condolence. If anything, it serves to highlight the personal depth of feeling Pierce must have felt for the Lincolns in their time of personal bereavement; it allows us even better to appreciate him as a man as well as a politician.

It is easy to forget that Presidents are men. This look at the ex-Presidents of Lincoln's day is a reminder that these men retained their personal and partisan views of the world. It would be hard to imagine an ex-President's club. Van Buren would have nothing to do with Buchanan, though both had been Democrats. Van Buren took the popular view that Buchanan was a "doughface" who truckled to the South instead of standing up to it as Andrew Jackson had done during the Nullification crisis. John Tyler remained a Virginian at heart and cast his fortunes with secession and against the country of which he had been President. Franklin Pierce and Millard Fillmore, the one a Democrat and the other a Whig in their prime,

retained a dislike of the Republican party. Fillmore supported the war with vigor but came to despair of the effort through suspicion that the Republican administration mishandled it. Pierce always blamed the war on Republican provocation and came quickly, and not without some provocation from the administration, to oppose the war effort bitterly. Ironically, James Buchanan, who labored under the heaviest burden of charges of Southern sympathies, was the least critical of the administration of any of the ex-Presidents except Martin Van Buren. Critical of Republican war aims like the rest, Buchanan, nevertheless, supported the war effort and maintained a high personal regard for his Presidential successor. Buchanan thus approached the twentieth-century ideal of an elder statesman.

Editor's Note: The Presidents of Lincoln's era have been rather well served by their biographers. Two splendid examples are Roy F. Nichols's *Franklin Pierce: Young Hickory of the Granite Hills* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1958) and Philip Shriver Klein's *President James Buchanan: A Biography* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1962). Robert J. Rayback's *Millard Fillmore: Biography of a President* (Buffalo: Buffalo Historical Society, 1959) and Robert Seager, II's *And Tyler Too: A Biography of John & Julia Gardiner Tyler* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963) are useful. There is no careful study of Martin Van Buren's later life. The sketches of these Presidents here are based on these volumes.



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 3. Lincoln and Buchanan did not meet again after this day.

Failed by multitude on way to his inauguration

By ROBERT M. BOLTWOOD
"Mr. Lincoln in Buffalo!" exclaimed The Buffalo Express.

Saturday, February 16, 1861, was a beautiful day in Buffalo. About dafternoon tremendous crowds edged toward the Exchange Street depot. At 4.30 a cannon on Michigan Street proclaimed the approach of the gaily decorated train bearing President-elect Abraham Lincoln from Springfield, Ill., to Washington for his inauguration. The cheering "that was mightier and more majestic in sound than the boom of the cannon" resounded through the station and the adjoining streets.

As Mr. Lincoln appeared on the platform of the last car, former President Millard Fillmore stepped forward and welcomed him. Soldiers of the 74th Regiment struggled to keep the "stupendous multitude" under control, but so eager were the people to express their devotion to President-elect that they broke through the military guard and almost injured the members of the Presidential party.

Cheered By Vast Crowd

Accompanied by Mr. Fillmore, acting Mayor A. S. Bemis, A. M. Clapp, Col. W. H. Lamon (marshal of District of Columbia), President-elect and Mrs. Lincoln entered a carriage drawn by four white bay horses. A guard of honor formed by Company D of the 74th Regiment, six carriages carrying the Lincoln sons (Thomas and Robert) and the remainder of the Presidential party, and four carriages containing newspaper representatives escorted the distinguished couple and his wife. Led by the 74th Cornet Band, the procession moved along Exchange Street to Michigan Street and thence to the American Hotel (on the site now occupied by Adam, Meldrum & Anderson's store).

Excitement everywhere was suspended. Buildings were draped with flags, and greetings. Of the thousands of city and country people lined along the line of march the Express remarked: "The living power of words exceeded the power of words. Packed upon the walks, crowded upon the roofs, crowded at the windows, clinging thickly to the railing upon which man or boy stood, heaped and overflowing here within view of the route of the expected procession, such a throng of humanity—of the rough and the genteel, of the masculine and the fair, of the old and the young, of the youngest, of every age and character—we never saw in our Queen City."

While standing on the balcony of the famous hotel west of New York Mr. Lincoln replied to an address by Acting Mayor Bemis. Directly across the street, on the Young Men's Christian Union, was a banner reading, "We will pray for you." While on the balcony, the President was introduced to the committee of reception, headed by A. M. Clapp, who had been with the Presidential party from Cleveland to Buffalo.

road delivered the wood, supplied by Lavi Vallier, harbor-master. As the Presidential procession neared the hotel, Canfield removed his coat and set to work amid much applause. Commented The Express: "It is proposed, we understand, to present Canfield with a medal of some sort, which shall contain as an inscription the single word 'Vidi.' ('I saw')."

Saturday evening Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln held public receptions at the American Hotel. In the ladies' parlor, Mrs. Lincoln stood under a canopy decorated with the national colors and emblems. For two hours she extended her hand to several hundred women and, according to The Express, she "was placed in a trying position for a lady, but acquitted herself charmingly. We shall not play the Jenkine, in a personal description of Mrs. Lincoln, for we despise such liberties with the gentle

City grief-stricken 4 years later by fu- neral train

sex; but we must be permitted to remark that she is a lady who will preside over the hospitalities of the Presidential mansion with a grace becoming to the exalted station."

"Not a Handsome Man"

Protected by Company D of the 74th Regiment, Abraham Lincoln stood for two hours on a platform at the top of the stairway leading to the lobby on the second floor. As the people filed up the right stairs and down the left, the President-elect acknowledged their greetings with bows. He kissed some little girls and to the few ladies in line he extended his hand—"a manual greeting to all being more ardu-

Multitude Waits Quietly

Slightly more than four years later, on the morning of April 28, 1865, a sorrow-stricken multitude quietly waited in the draped Exchange Street depot. At 7 o'clock the train slowly entered the station. Beneath the headlights of the locomotive was a portrait of Abraham Lincoln, encircled by two American flags draped in black and white crepe.

Escorted by the draped Union Cornet Band and a guard of honor from the 65th Regiment, the funeral car bearing the body of the slain President proceeded solemnly along streets plunged in mourning. The procession moved from Exchange Street to Main to Niagara to Delaware to Tupper to Main to Eagle Street.

From 10 o'clock in the morning till 8.15 in the evening thousands of persons reverently filed past the coffin, resting in St. James Hall.

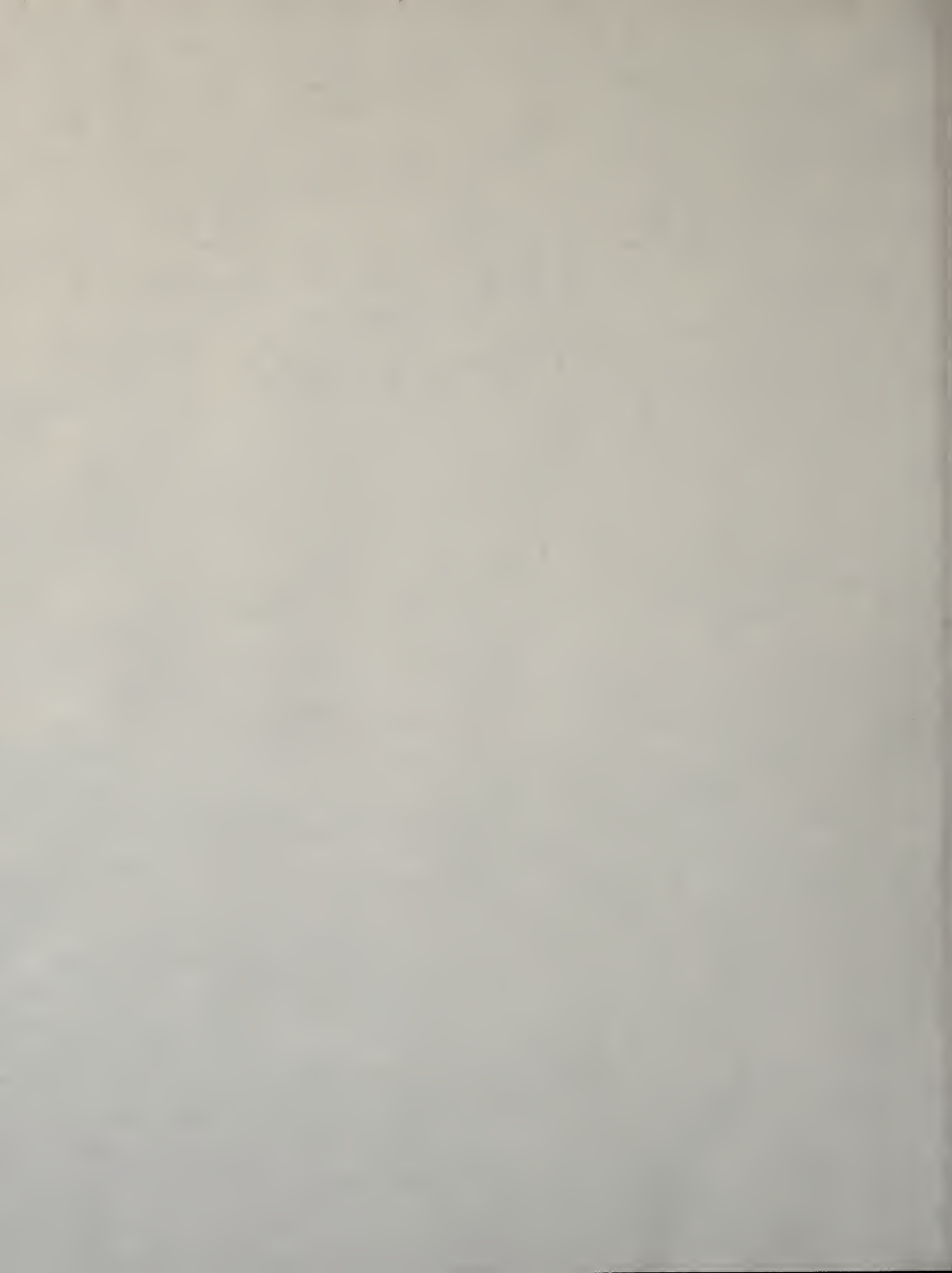
Loser Pays His Bet. . . .

But J. H. Canfield of Buffalo was unable to celebrate the arrival of the famous rail-splitter. During the Presidential campaign Canfield and George Mugridge of Buffalo had made a solemn agreement: if Lincoln should be elected, Canfield would saw half a cord of wood in front of the American Hotel; and if Douglas should be elected, Mugridge would do it.

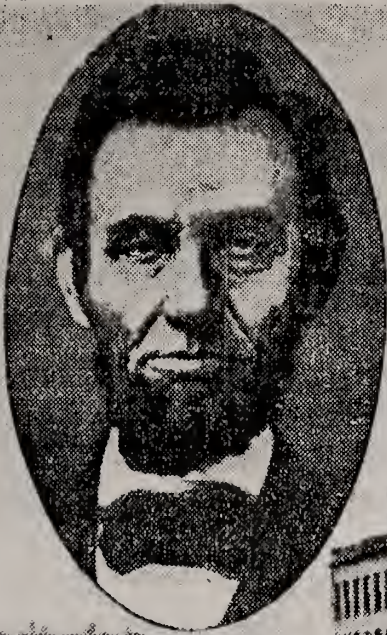
The Buffalo & Lake Huron Rail-

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When City Paid Homage to Martyred Leader



Celebration today of Abraham Lincoln's birthday recalls his triumphal visit to Buffalo in 1861, when he stopped over here on his way to Washington for his inauguration and was cheered by a "stupendous multitude." It recalls, too, the sad occasion in 1865 when the grief-stricken city turned out to mourn his martyrdom. From the files of the Buffalo Historical Society come the pictures above of Lincoln as President; of the immense crowd in Main Street just above Niagara as his funeral cortege passed, and the funeral train draped in mourning.

Great Day in History of Buffalo Was Arrival of Lincoln in 1861

ous than he could be expected to extend."

At 9.30 Mr. Lincoln greeted a committee of German citizens, who welcomed him on behalf of their people. He replied that he knew no distinctions in citizenship.

In describing the President-elect, The Express said: "He is certainly not a handsome man, but there is an expression in his face, much due to the eye that lights it, perhaps, which is pleasing in the extreme. There is blending of gravity and goodness in his look, even when the face is in repose, which wins confidence and affection, and satisfies one of his fitness for the great office, with its weighty responsibilities, to which he has been called by the people of the United States."

The finest rooms in the American Hotel were generously given to the Lincolns by a man and woman who were residents there. Soon the excitement in and about the hotel subsided and "before a very late hour the ordinary quiet of the house was restored."

Saturday was a most important day from another standpoint; pocket-picking flourished as never before in the history of Buffalo. The "light-fingered gentry" managed to be present wherever a crowd stood to see the renowned visitor. Reported The Express: "The list of sufferers from their manipulatory skill is greater than we ever had occasion to report. We have definite knowledge of no less than fifteen cases, and have heard innumerable floating stories, from which we can only derive the idea that victims are to be numbered by scores."

Occupied Fillmore Pew

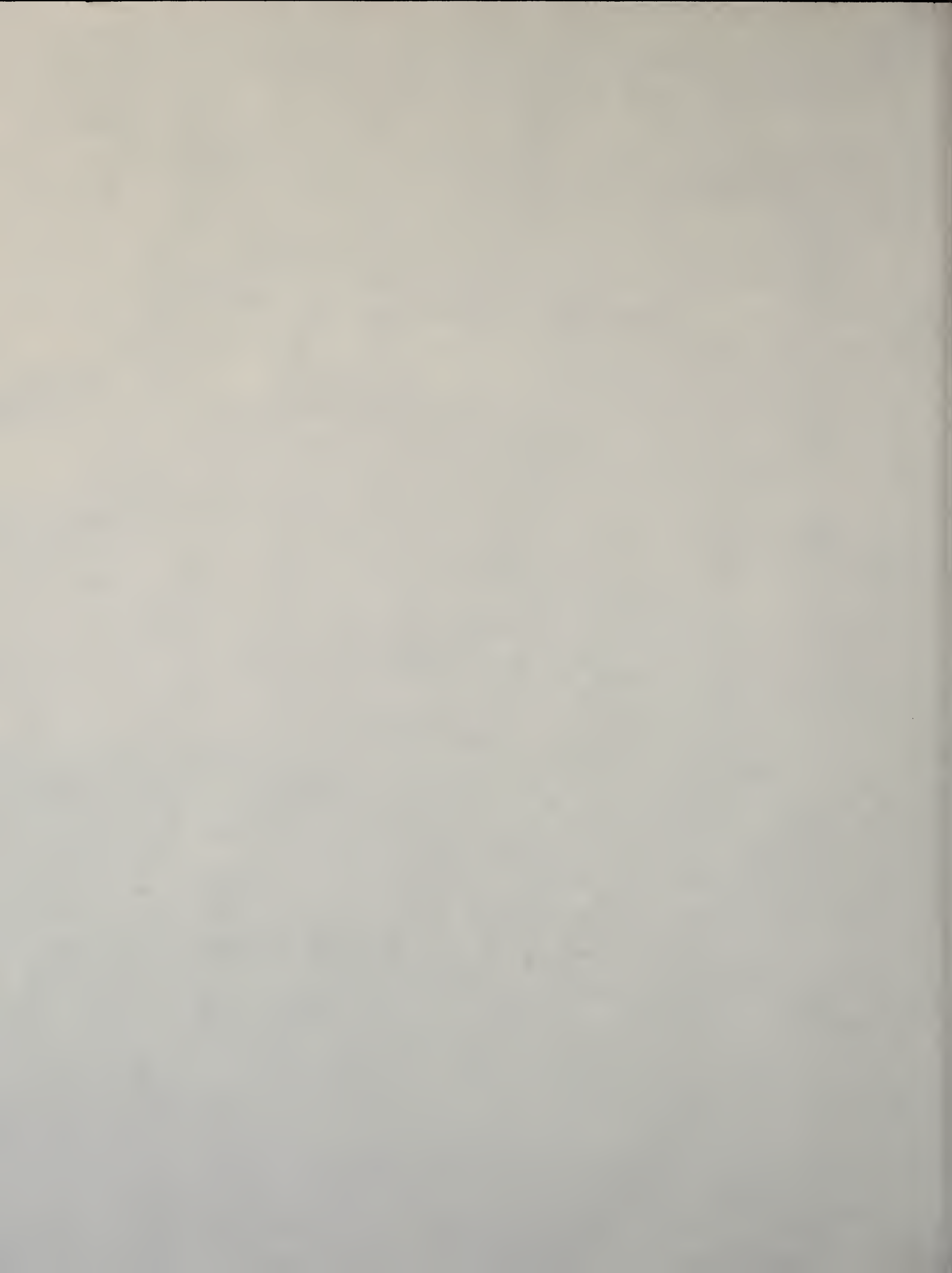
Sunday morning former President Fillmore called for Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln in his carriage and took them to the First Unitarian Church, where they occupied the Fillmore pew. The original church building still stands on the northwest corner of Franklin and Eagle streets and is occupied today by the Abstract Title & Mortgage Corporation. A tablet on the southeast corner of the building mentions Lincoln's visit.

After church, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln had dinner at the Fillmore home, situated where the Hotel Statler now stands.

Sunday evening, President-elect Lincoln accompanied former President Fillmore and Acting Mayor Bemis to St. James Hall (on the site now occupied by the Gerrans Building) to hear Father Beeson lecture on the plight of the Indians.

Observed The Express: "A respectable audience was present, but, of course, had it been known that Mr. Lincoln would attend, there would have been a tremendous rush to the hall. Many will now regret that they did not feel more interested in 'the cause of the poor Indian'."

At 4.30 Monday morning, Company D of the 74th Regiment assembled outside the American Hotel to conduct the Presidential party to the Exchange Street depot. A short while later, President-elect and Mrs. Lincoln, escorted by the Union Cornet Band and six carriages, departed for the station, where several hundred persons watched the special train leave for Albany at 5.45.



Lincoln's Church Attendance Here Recalled by Unitarian

Edward Michael, Lone Survivor of First Sunday School
Class, Long Active Worker.

A little boy, his eyes aglow with excitement, sat with his parents in the First Unitarian church more than 70 years ago, and watched with awe the entrance of President Lincoln.

That same boy, Edward Michael, 314 Delaware avenue, now a veteran attorney, sat in his offices in the Brisbane building Thursday, and told of his presence as the Great Emancipator arrived for the services and walked to the pew of his host, Millard Fillmore, one of Buffalo's two presidents.

"Mr. Lincoln came to church unannounced," Mr. Michael said. "No word had gone out that the president would attend the services, and to say that the congregation was pleasantly surprised is putting it mildly."

That was back in February, 1861, when the church, now located in West Ferry street at Elmwood avenue, was on the site at Franklin and Eagle streets, now the location of the Abstract Title & Mortgage company. His boyhood impression of President Lincoln is one of his fondest memories.

A memorial, unveiled Wednesday on the building at Franklin and Eagle streets, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the church, sets forth that President Lincoln attended the church with his host, Mr. Fillmore.

Mr. Michael became a member of the Unitarian Sunday school when he was 5 years old and later joined the church.

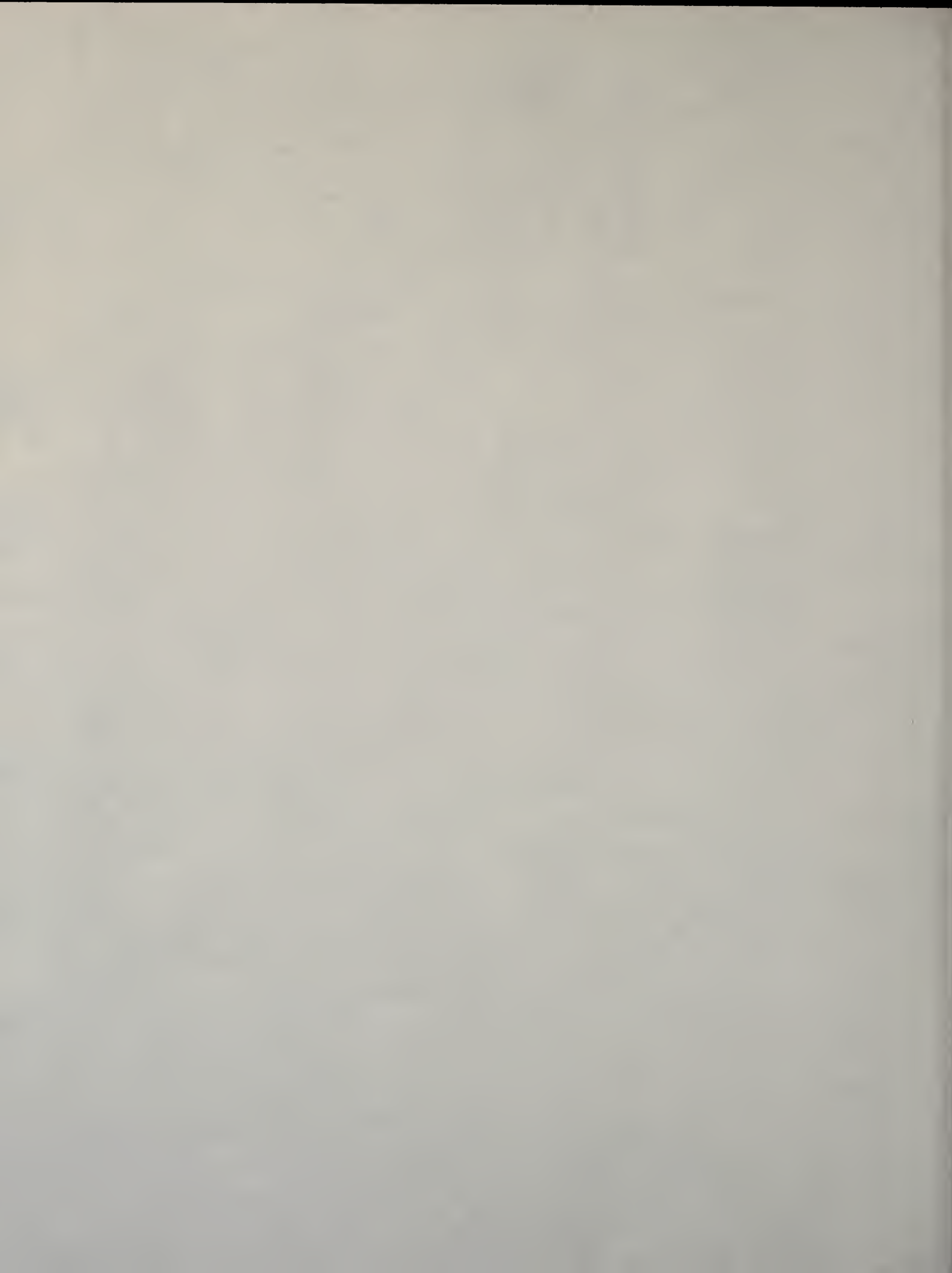
He has been actively identified with church activities for many years, having served as a member of the board of trustees for a long period.

Mr. Michael recalled Thursday that he is the only surviving member of that first Sunday school class he joined ~~many~~ in the 1850's.

Church-going was accepted as a duty in those days, he said.

"The church had 100 pews, as I remember it, and they were all rented and all occupied on Sundays," he added.

His father, the late John Michael, was one of the early members of the church.



SUBMITTED BY: jie

Wed Feb 14 15:07:49 1996

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FILE TO JOAN FLINSPACH ON ABOLITIONISTS AND UNITARIANS

Large Magazine envelope: Religion: Lincoln's God by John F Hayward
The Unitarian Register Vol 139, No. 2
February 1960, pp 3-5

Vertical File Drawer 4A Denominational Contacts UNITARIANS

The Almost Chosen People by William J. Wolf describing Jesse W. Fell's Influence
(Fell was Unitarian)

The Life of Jesse W. Fell by Frances Milton I. Morehouse

Presume you have ABRAHAM LINCOLN ENCYCLOPEDIA for the Abolitionist references

Jim Eber 2/14/96

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